



The Phonographic Record

The Journal of The Vintage Phonograph Society of New Zealand

A Society formed for the preservation of Recorded Sound

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RONALD W. OSGOOD

I would like to pay a tribute to the memory of a member and a friend of many years, Ron Osgood of Blenheim who died on 30 December, 1971 aged 73.

Ron would be remembered by those members who have attended the conventions held in the past and although not an active phonograph collector, nevertheless he took a keen interest in the Society's activities. His own particular specialty was player pianos and organs and he greatly enjoyed demonstrating them to the numerous visitors to his home.

In a way it was Ron who started me on phono collecting. Nearly 20 years ago I was staying at Ron's place when I landed my very first machine - a 1905 short keywind Gem - the cylinders which I got from a different source - were Blue Amherols. Naturally, as the Gem had only 2 minute gearing, the records wouldn't play and it was from Ron that I learnt that there were 2 minute and 4 minute cylinders. As Ron had grown up in the Edwardian era he remembered vividly using such machines and could recite several of Billy Williams' songs before we had turned up the same songs on cylinders.

Ron left no immediate family but had a large number of friends in the Vintage Phonograph and Vintage Car movements.

I cherish the memory of a long friendship with a collector friend.

Wally Gollidge.

We were pleased to receive from one of our Auckland members the excellent photographs which appear on our illustrations page and also this description by him of his

THREE RARE EDISON MACHINES

by Len Stenersen

The oldest of the three is an Edison Electric Motor. I understand this motor is one of the first electric motors ever offered to the public by Thomas Edison. The motor is rated as 6 volt D.C. and the power pack originally offered with it was 4 Edison-Lalande cells. A brass plate on the top of the motor states that it was made in Orange, N.J. in 1888 by The Edison Manufacturing Co. (Thomas A. Edison Prop.). The motor has two adjustable ball race bearings - mica divided commutator - sprung woven copper brushes - and a Paccinotti ring type armature. It stands 9 inches high and is in perfect running order. The following facts which can be found in the book Edison the Man and His Work by George S. Byron attest to the age of this motor. In the Chronology at the back of the book it states that Edison removed his laboratory and headquarters to West Orange, New Jersey in 1887 and on page 181 it states that the financier, Henry Villard 'matured a scheme for the absorption of all the Edison Light and Manufacturing Companies into a new corporation with sufficient fresh capital for manufacturing

electrical apparatus on a large scale. Out of this grew the Edison General Electric Co. organized in April 1889.

The next youngest machine is a standard mandrel Class 'M' Electric Edison Phonograph. This phonograph was found in Auckland, New Zealand and I believe this is possibly the only one of this type to have been found in New Zealand. It is complete with a brass flared horn, recording tube, ear tube, chip brush, an original 1887 Edison recorder, the same early Edison speaker and also a combination recorder/speaker called the Edison Standard Speaker. Except for the cabinet which is a reproduction, the rest of the phonograph is original.

The third machine is an Edison School Phonograph. This is basically an Opera works housed in a metal cabinet. This cabinet rests on end and is removable from the four legs which act as an open cabinet to hold the twenty-four record drawers. The cygnet horn is all metal. The reproducer is a Diamond 'A'. This phonograph has a speed adjusting lever which gives a far greater range of speeds than that of my mahogany Opera; the speed range is from about 60 r.p.m. to 160 r.p.m. The School Phonograph has a square wooden top with a hole at the right rear of the top to facilitate the horn. I also have an attachment which replaces the 'A' reproducer and holds an Edison 4 minute recorder thus enabling recordings to be made on this machine. Usually on most external horn Edison Phonographs the top deck is hinged at the back to enable adjustments and repairs to be made to the motor but the top deck of the School Phonograph is not hinged and to get at the motor a steel plate under the case has to be unscrewed. The machine has the usual Opera patent plate behind the mandrel but it appears that an additional plate which was riveted to the deck in front of the moving mandrel is missing. If any reader has, or knows of one of these School Phonographs, I would be grateful if they would contact me (at 126 New Windsor Road, Avondale, Auckland, New Zealand) so that I may be able to obtain details of the wording of the missing plate.

TWO ROOTS IN EUROPE

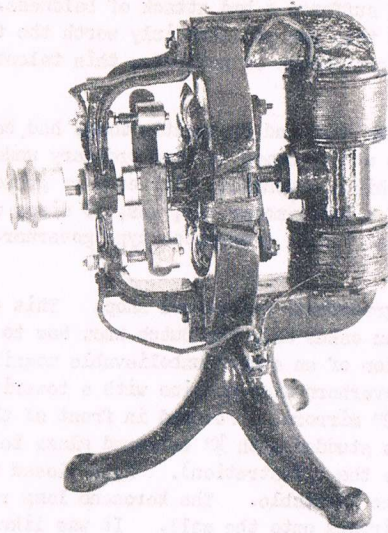
by Jack Root

Collecting knows no boundaries. For some, collecting knows no bounds. For my wife Renee and myself collecting knows neither boundaries nor bounds.

We had received a mixed bag of comments on our planned trip to Europe last July. Some collector friends advised us to 'stick' to sightseeing; others were convinced Europe had been 'done over' by wealthy Americans several times and were quite sure that most European countries were starved of phonographic treasures. Indeed, it certainly took time, frequently a lot of time, to hunt for the elusive and hidden treasures in dark and dusty lofts and musty basements. Yet it was proved beyond all doubt that there still are phonographs and musical boxes to be found. It just takes a little more wit and perseverance.

On the 26th of June we took off and after we stocked up on cameras, tape recorders, transistor radios and the inevitable crocodile handbag in Singapore, we flew on to Schiphol Airport, Amsterdam. After the customary warm welcome by the family had cooled down somewhat (this usually occurs within the first four days), we motored through Holland and metamorphosised from staid tourists into ardent antique hunters, joining the ranks of a not uncommon breed in the low countries and indeed, the whole of western Europe.

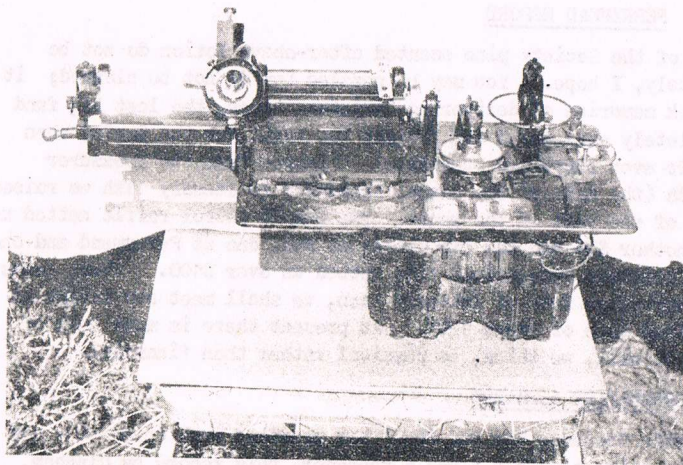
In the Hague, a Mecca for the admirer of the old and unusual, we arrived at a small and obscure second hand shop and tracked down an early Columbia BX phonograph, minus reproducer, on the mandrel of which a two minute cylinder was perched. We did not take any notice of the cylinder - we expected it to be cracked anyway. Yes, the machine was for sale, at a price. A price, which we decided, was something to be talked over. This we did at a sidewalk cafe, keeping our heads cool with a suitably frothing 'Heinekens' beer (the national favourite). We counted our coppers and decided that it was foolish to leave a Columbia BX in a shop, particularly as this model did not feature in our collection. So, back we went and out we came with our new acquisition. You can image our surprise when we inspected the 2 minute wax cylinder and discovered that it was Anton van Rooy on Edison concert series No. B19. Perhaps we had not made such a bad buy after all.



THE EDISON ELECTRIC MOTOR



THE EDISON SCHOOL PHONOGRAPH



THE CLASS 'M' ELECTRIC MOTOR (NEGATIVE REVERSED)

The Hague is literally littered with antique shops and we completed the usual round. We arrived at a basement type shop (mind your head on the beams) called 'The Cachot', after the medieval prison. There we found a 'Du common Girod' musical box, key wind. Partly wrecked but potentially restorable; that is, all the teeth were there, but the cylinder had suffered a bad attack of baldness. The art of repinning a cylinder is something to be acquired and this box was certainly worth the treatment and with God willing, the weather permitting and the right amount of patience, this talent was waiting to be applied to this partly damaged masterpiece.

Generally, prices for good running machines were sky high and frequently these had been tampered with, or 'beautified' by unscrupulous dealers. It was not uncommon to find ordinary underhorn table gramophones converted to grandiose looking overhorn machines - complete with equally grandiose price tags. We were offered a 15" Polyphon for the price of a small motor car, yes, 15 discs were thrown in as a generous gesture. Closer inspection revealed an H.M.V. gramophone type governor. Another 'expert' bungle!

We visited Mr. and Mrs. Dolf Schroeder's antique gramophone and record shop. This delightful couple treated us to afternoon tea and the type of cream cakes only the Dutch know how to create and they were good enough to show us their private collection of an almost unbelievable magnitude. One particular machine has to be seen to be believed; an overhorn disc machine with a towering huge brass horn, the inside of the bell faceted with small 6" x 2" mirrors. Perched in front of the bell was a revolving kerosene lamp, the brass skirt of which was studded with $\frac{1}{2}$ " coloured glass beads. Perched on top of the funnel was a brass half moon (see the illustration). Dolf closed the curtains, lit the kerosene lamp and placed an Arabic record on the turntable. The kerosene lamp revolved, reflecting an array of multicolours via the faceted mirrors onto the wall. It was like a fairy story - a truly remarkable machine. Dolf generously gave us a brass Pathe horn, complete with bullet holes. The accompanying story has it that the horn came off a machine which had been in the front line during the 1914-18 war. Regrettably, we were unable to check the facts.

On we motored to the city of Breda, where we were offered the works of a rather nice Bremond musical box with bell attachment. Unfortunately the owner thought that he was sitting on the last musical box held in captivity and had adjusted his price accordingly. Regrettably, no contract was entered into.

To be continued.

FERRYMEAD REPORT

If you offer any of several members of the Society pine scented after-shave lotion do not be surprised if your gift is refused - politely, I hope. You may be puzzled but do not be alarmed; it is just that the scent of pine brings back memories of delivering Christmas trees, the last big fund raising effort for 1971. This was completely successful and brought the total for the period when we had a target of \$1,000, to \$1,200. We even surprised ourselves! Figures from the Treasurer show that in the period from September 9th (the date of the Annual Accounts) to January 11th we raised over \$600 more than we had for the whole of the rest of the year. The second petrol raffle netted us just on \$140, the Christmas tree sales another \$74 and the two stalls we ran, one at Ferrymead and one at Kaiapoi (where we had a float in the Christmas Procession) also netted us over \$100. There seems no doubt at all that, with the amount promised on free of interest loan, we shall meet our target in time to shift the church before the required date of March 17th. At present there is much talk of 'fill' and foundations and our next efforts will, we think, be physical rather than financial.

SURREALIST ALPHABET

John Stokes' article entitled 'A Little Nonsense Now and Then' has provoked much interest - and a letter from Jim Davis of Tasmania. Jim writes: "When I was a teenager, this record by Clapham and Dwyer was one of my favourites and it was not recorded as late as 1938, I would say around 1929 or 1930." Jim has added the following (which includes one or two corrections):

D for ential (Differential)
H for Respect (Age for respect)

E for Adam (Eve for Adam)
I for Navaro (Ivan Navaro)

K for Ancis (Kay Francis)
P for pennies

N fra dig
U for Films (Ufa films)

S still remains a mystery but Clive Morrison who is at present unpacking his very large record collection to settle back in Christchurch has the record and when it comes to light he will provide us with the missing information.

FOR EXCHANGE: Some 'Duo-Art' player-piano and 'Niagara' piano-player rolls.

WANTED: Music Hall recordings and sheet music. Gavin East, 60 Garreg Road, Christchurch 5, New Zealand.

It is often argued that with so many collectors in Christchurch there is little of value to be obtained in the city. Once again this theory has become a little bent by the acquisition by Ivan Skilling of

THE COLUMBIA 'AR' GRAPHOPHONE

This magnificent machine certainly is a 'Graphophone de Luxe' as the catalogue describes it. Scarcely 'portable' as the weight is 46 lbs. the mahogany cabinet which has simple but beautifully balanced shape is highly polished. The horn is brass 30 inches long and 16½ inches across the bell, gives wonderful reproduction, clear round and powerful without being deafening. The horn arms (note the unusual top arm) are nickel plated and the powerful motor, in its youth, would play ten average ten inch records on one winding. Ivan's machine is in excellent order and the little restoration has been done extremely well. We have been most impressed with it, both by sight and by sound.

'PALACE OF VARIETIES'

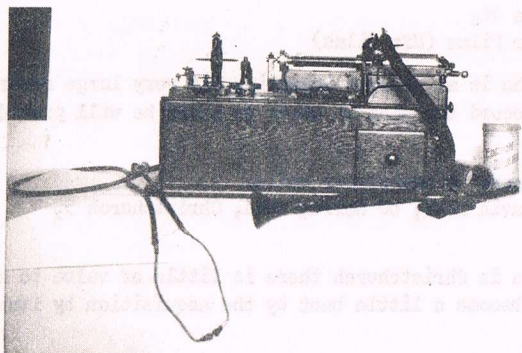
by Bill Dini

On the 3rd of December, 1971, The New Zealand Settlers' Club (Christchurch) held a 'Palace of Varieties' in the Caledonian Hall. This was a function similar to 'Those Were the Days' a New Zealand produced television series which included Music Hall songs and acts. The audience was seated at tables; in front of them jugs of beer and glasses of sherry. Stew, sausages and mashed potatoes constituted the supper. My part was to be in the theatre foyer an hour before the show started, playing my Celestina (an American organette with paper rolls). The tune I played was 'Oh where, oh where has my little dog gone' - quite appropriate. As you can see by the photograph I was dressed for the occasion! I also played Music Hall records on my Edison Concert. The whole show had a distinct Edwardian flavour. I was acknowledged on the programme as a member of our Society and did some advertising while chatting to those attending who showed interest. A very enjoyable evening.

In his concluding article Gordon Garraway instructs us in the art of applying

A FRENCH POLISH FINISH

After staining, apply a thin coat of French Polish by brush, leave four or five hours, steel wool down and apply another thin coat, again by brush. It is up to you to decide whether to put another coat on by brush or start using a pad. Much depends on the porosity of the surface. To make a rubber or pad for polishing, I use cheesecloth folded into a square approximately 2 inches square with three or four folds. Put this inside a clean piece of soft (but not fluffy) cloth about 6 inches square. You can sew this around the top or just twist it around and hold by hand - or a rubber band will do. To body up the surface: Soak your pad in the polish which should not be too thick - the thinner the polish and thus the more coats used, the better the finish. It is hard to explain the next procedure but, after charging the pad with polish, apply in a circular motion making sure you do not squeeze too hard. Always use gentle pressure at first and apply more pressure as the pad dries out - don't play around too long or your pad will stick. Keep your pad, when not in use, in an airtight jar with a small portion of meths in the bottom; this will keep it from going hard. After three or four hours, lightly steel wool the surface, charge your rubber or pad with polish and, starting at the point farthest away from you, put polish on from end to end in a straight even stroke, coming down on to the end lightly and off the other end without stopping. This way of



THE CLASS 'M' ELECTRIC EDISON PHONOGRAPH IN CASE

TYPE "AR" GRAPHOPHONE

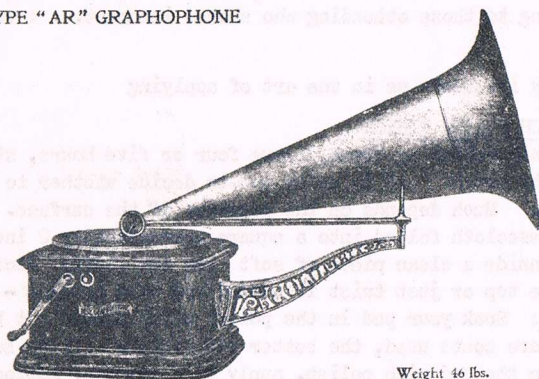
For all sizes of disc records.
Weight 46 lbs.

THIS is a Graphophone de Luxe. It is made for those who want only the very best that can be obtained, and it excites universal admiration, both on account of its handsome appearance and the superb quality of its reproductions. It has a solid mahogany cabinet, highly polished. The horn is of brass, 30 inches long and 16½ inches across the bell. The spring motor is exceedingly powerful, and runs about ten average 10-inch records with a single winding. The horn arms are nickel-plated, and the hinged top of the cabinet lifts up to permit of ready inspection of the motor. This instrument is a worthy ornament to any room

Price - £18 10 0

Includes Improved Concert Reproducer, 30-inch Brass Horn, Nickel-plated Horn Support, Mahogany Cabinet, Winding Crank, 100 Needles and Two-part Needle Box.

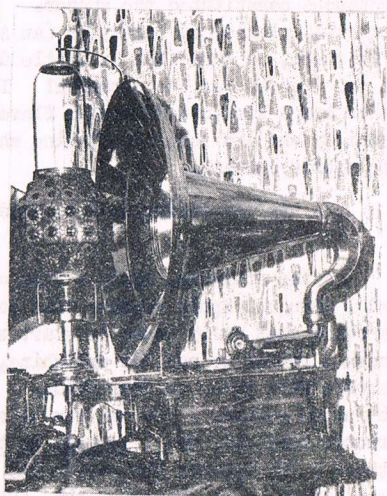
TYPE "AR" GRAPHOPHONE



Weight 46 lbs.



"WHERE DID YOU GET THAT HAT?"
BILL DINI AND 'PALACE OF VARIETIES'



'TWO ROOTS IN EUROPE'
AND THE ARABIC MACHINE

TWO PAGES FROM A COLUMBIA CATALOGUE

applying polish will only come by experience; the main thing is not to stop in the middle of the stroke. Repeat the same process with a circular motion then put the article away for eight to ten hours. Next step is to steel wool down again and polish in using the end to end method. To stop the pad sticking put a couple of spots of Three-in-One oil on the surface of the pad. And now for the finishing: Have a very fine grade of sandpaper, put linseed oil over the surface of the paper, and going with the grain of the wood, start your final sanding for a smooth surface. Make sure you rub it off with a clean and dust free cloth. Repeat the polishing process with end to end method, always applying slightly more pressure to the heel of your pad as you go. (The heel of the pad is the point nearest to your body when polishing.) If you press too hard on the front of the pad you will have a streaky and uneven surface so therefore as you stroke the pad, the heel should be down and the toe up. A good idea is to learn to polish a four foot by twelve inch board first, cut the surface back and start all over again. If you do not want to go to the bother of stripping the surface of the old polish it can be cut back with wet and dry paper. The most awkward piece of furniture to polish is one with mouldings, carved work etc. On pieces of this nature you can build up a surface with an artist's small brush and finish off with a small polishing pad. A pad can be made to any shape - three cornered, round or square.

And finally - remember that extra time spent on any job will give equally extra satisfaction in the result of a fine finish.

Although this completes Gordon Garraway's method of stripping work and building up a new finish in next issue we shall print recipes for fillers etc. and general hints to help the amateur get a really professional finish.

The Editors,
"The Phonographic Record"

Dear Sir and Madam,

I would like to congratulate you on the extremely high standard of the "Phonographic Record" and to comment on some of the material contained in Volume 7, Issue 1.

The earliest Gilbert and/or Sullivan recording ever made would probably be the Gouraud cylinder made on October 5, 1888 by Sir Arthur Sullivan himself, an excellent recording of which is included in the Argo "Wonder of the Age" LP set.

Regarding the two Berliner machines, I see no justification for describing them as "disc phonographs" for technical and traditional reasons explained below.

Edison and Berliner named their inventions (if we accept them as such) respectively "phonograph" and "gramophone" and in each case the nature of the groove employed in the recording played an integral part. Since the late eighteen-eighties, it has been accepted that technically speaking, a phonograph employs a vertical or hillandale-cut groove, a gramophone a lateral-cut groove. Some machines, e.g. Emersons with their 45-degree cut, are difficult to classify thus, but the distinction is generally convenient.

In terms of tradition and popular usage, certain countries have adopted one or other of the two names (of almost identical Greek derivation) as representative of both types of machine. Generally speaking, Americans have adopted "phonograph", the British "gramophone"; I offer below some suggestions for the reasons for this.

In North America, early disc machines were recognised as gramophones, the companies bearing such names as "United States Gramophone Co." (1893), "Berliner Gramophone Co." and "National Gramophone Co." The term "gramophone" passed out of general use with the patent wrangles of the late nineties - Eldridge Johnson emerged able to manufacture disc machines but not to call them "gramophones." Obviously unable to use the names "phonograph" or "graphophone", he broke away from the Victorian tradition of sundry "-ographs" and "-ophones" and resumed operations as the "Consolidated Talking Machine Co." (from October 1901 the "Victor Talking Machine Co."), manufacturing the Victor machine.

In the years that followed it was inevitable that the American public would come to use one general name for devices of identical function; "gramophone" was commercially extinct, "talking machine" was clumsy and "graphophone" was recognised as an unwieldy variant of "phonograph." Why did "phonograph" win the day? Partly by default, but largely I feel, through the connotation of the term. Edison was a household name and like Henry Ford, something of a folk-hero; the phonograph had always been associated with him and regarded as a great American invention with which people could "identify" and thus the term came to embrace all disc and cylinder machines, the latter being popularly assumed to have become disc machines at some unspecified stage in the distant past.

In Britain and to a similar extent, New Zealand, "gramophone" has long been dominant, probably due to the commercial lead of the Gramophone Company. "Phonograph" has survived, however, probably due once again to its association with Edison and (in New Zealand anyway) its "old-time" ring (the old Edison phonograph back home on the farm etc.). Many New Zealanders will of course call an Edison Standard a "cylinder gramophone" (or for that matter "gramophone").

The point I have laboriously tried to make is that historically and technically, a phonograph uses vertical-cut and a gramophone lateral-cut recordings, and that the predominant popular use in any one country of one or the other term has been brought about largely by the connotation which that term has developed through its origin and/or commercial use. I feel that the use of the term "disc phonograph" in describing Berliner machines is technically and (for a New Zealand journal) traditionally incorrect.

The machine described as Berliner's first gramophone is I think, his first disc gramophone, his first gramophone being the cylinder machine (with lateral groove) illustrated in his original patent - this was really a phonautograph capable of reproduction. This first disc gramophone is presumably the partner to the 1888 recording machine with its alcohol bottle and recorder mounted on rollers. A photograph of the reproducing device appears in "Talking Machines" by V.K. Chew, acknowledgement being given to the Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C. - since the photograph appears to be a fairly recent one, it is probable that the machine, being the prototype, is now in the Smithsonian Institution.

As for the machine described as Berliner's second (1889) gramophone, it could apparently be later than this. The source of this illustration would be of interest, since it could, from its appearance, be a commercial engraving (slightly out of perspective at that) from a catalogue. The first commercially produced gramophones were those made by the toy making firm of Kammerer and Reinhardt of Waltershausen, Germany from 1889 - they acquired the rights from Berliner during his visit from America in that year.

Yours sincerely,

BURL INNER.

We apologise to Burl Inner for abridging his letter but the latter part of it refers to inventions of Berliner with which we have yet to deal.